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For Immediate Release

BOURASSA HOLDS OUT PROMISE OF ADDITIONAL FUNDS

MONTREAL / February 16, 1988 --- At a meeting yesterday with a five-member delegation from Concordia University's Board of Governors, Québec Premier Robert Bourassa held out the promise of corrective action for Concordia when a permanent funding formula is introduced in the near future for all Québec universities. In the interim, however, he said that no additional funds will be allotted to Concordia.

"Mr. Bourassa was very positive in recognizing the severity of our financial difficulties and quick to compliment Concordia for the contributions it continues to make to Québec society," said Board of Governors Chairman P. André Gervais, Q. C.

"But he offered nothing more to help us meet our immediate financial needs."

Yesterday's meeting was the first that Premier Bourassa has ever held on the subject of university funding with representatives of a single university.

On the fundamental issue of university operating grants, Concordia still finds it unacceptable that it will receive a paltry 4.3% of the $3.75 million made available to correct historic inequalities in university funding -- a mere $183,000.

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It is pleased, however, that a concession has been made to limit that distribution to the two year period 1987-1989. Concordia left yesterday's meeting with a commitment that such funds will be distributed in a different manner when a new funding formula is introduced.

The meeting with Premier Bourassa followed months of public and private appeals from Concordia, the public and elements in the media to raise Concordia's operating funds to the provincial average.

The University -- which currently has 26,000 graduate and undergraduate students enrolled in four faculties -- receives about $1,300 less per full-time equivalent student than the provincial average. The University estimates conservatively that it has lost more than $100 million in revenues during the past decade because of inadequate and discriminatory government funding policies.

"The University finds it hard to believe that after years of recognizing the severity of its financial plight, the government now maintains that new studies tend to minimize the extent of Concordia's underfunding," Mr. Gervais said.

"Anyone even remotely connected with the Concordia community knows that this University's financial difficulties are as formidable as ever, and consequently we will continue to press our case for equitable treatment in as vigorous a manner as possible."

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In addition to Mr. Gervais the Concordia delegation was composed of Board of Governors Vice-Chairman Paul E. Martin, President & Chief Executive Officer of The C.S.L. Group; Professor Joti Bhatnagar of Concordia's Education Department; Maxine Clarke, Co-President of the Concordia University Students' Association; and Dr. Maurice Cohen, Concordia's Vice-Rector, Institutional Relations & Finance.

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